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of the lunar attraction. If this hypothesis is confirmed by more accurate observations, the theory of Galileo will not only help us in our explanations of the aerial tides, but it will also lead to the recognition of a most important element in the ocean tides.

Prof. Coppée suggested that the subject of the “Danish Element in England,” was worthy of the attention of the Society, describing the traces, still obvious, of the original Celtic and Teutonic occupation of the island. Dr. Washburne spoke of the northern English types, as existing in New England, and were deserving of farther study. Dr. Coates referred to the translation, by early emigrants, of old english names of places to the new localities in New England, which the emigrants occupied; and made further observations upon the origin of human races. Mr. Chase referred to the alleged early settlement of America by the Northmen.

Professor Lesley was nominated Librarian for the ensuing year.

Pending nominations Nos. 506, 507, were read.

And the Society was adjourned.

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*Stated Meeting, January 15, 1864.*

Present, eighteen members.

Dr. Wood, President, in the Chair.

A letter accepting membership was received from Dr. Theodore Schwann, of Liège.

A communication from Mr. H. Stephens, of London, was read, proposing to act as general book agent, in Europe.

Donations for the Library were received from Prof. Zantedeschi, the Hon. J. D. Baldwin, Messrs. Blanchard & Lea, and Mr. C. H. Hart.

Dr. Emerson communicated the following fact, respecting the propagation of atmospheric vibrations to great distances.

He was at a place in the State of Delaware, on the night of the great explosion at Yorktown, Va., and one hundred and fifty miles distant from that city. The windows of his house were shaken in so remarkable a manner, that he could assign no other cause, but that of the explosion of the Yorktown powder magazines. Prof. Cresson mentioned an instance of a similar nature, which had come under his own observation, and, apparently, confirming Dr. Emerson's views.

Mr. Price read part of a paper entitled, "The Family, as an Element of Government."

### THE FAMILY AS AN ELEMENT OF GOVERNMENT.

"God setteth the solitary in families."—PSALM 68 : 6.

It is with hesitation and misgiving that I bring this subject before you ; fearing to detain your attention too long, and apprehensive that it may not be thought strictly appropriate for our discussion. That the subject most nearly relates to man and his well-being, and is to disclose the design of the Creator in regard to him, should not make it the less one, it seems to me, of philosophical inquiry and interest. And if from the physical we should rise, in our investigations, to the moral and social welfare of man, still the subject will retain all its philosophical fitness, and deserve our attention. Permit me, then, to confess at the outset that I cherish the design to do a moral good, in my limited ability, and the better to do it, I wish to borrow your prestige. I have thought that if you would listen with approbation, others will think it worth while to read, and that ideas deemed salutary to society, though familiar to you, may thus more favorably reach those to whom they are less known. I cannot promise you novelty, for in constantly observed human nature, law, and morals, there is not so much opportunity to discover anything new, as there is a duty to insist upon what is already known for our good ; and as law and morals have for their object but to state and impress a sound rule of conduct in life, sound practical sense is the highest merit that a writer upon these subjects can hope to attain.

I am conscious of addressing some, who, as naturalists, are accustomed to study the nature and habits of living creatures lower in the scale of beings than man. These are studied with a laborious care, minuteness, and skill, and an exactness of classification, that is absolutely surprising to others who are differently occupied. And for

ment of nature, given as the conquering enemy of fire, was also divided into its constituent gases, and these, as recombined by the compound blowpipe of our Dr. Hare, produced a heat hotter than the thrice heated anthracite furnace. The lightning, which all mankind, of all ages, had beheld with wonder and superstitious awe, as it flashed through the skies, leaping from cloud to cloud and from heaven to earth, detonating in stunning thunders, was proved by our Dr. Franklin, as he drew it harmlessly from the sky, to be electricity; and now men make it bear their messages of business and command, with the lightning's speed, over this globe. And we see it, in this our day and country, performing duties of mightiest potency, since from the central capital it carries the commands that move the distant armies spread over our wide continent, in that concert of action that insures victory and safety to the legitimate Government of the nation.

These are discoveries most interesting, most useful, most brilliant; and no such discovery and renown can reward the reflections of him who devotes himself to the social, moral, and religious improvement of his fellow men. Yet let not the legist, moralist, or the preacher, be discouraged, but console himself in this, that whatsoever good he may do shall achieve a success in a domain of yet higher import than all physical discoveries; that he may elevate the moral standard of humanity, and create a virtue and happiness that shall belong to two existences. If mankind shall fail in these, then will they fail in the highest purpose of the Creator, and make creation itself a failure. If this shall be the event, what then shall import all wealth, all power, all science, all knowledge? what this air we breathe, this earth we tread, and all its fruits; its bright waters, its glorious light and electrical coruscations; all that shall sustain all life, and all that shall yield to the physical philosophers their rich harvests of glory? They become worthless all, if man shall betray his highest trust and fall. If man prove worthless, these are worthless all! Truly, then, there is a philosophy that transcends and comprehends all other philosophies, the philosophy that teaches man how to live and how to die.

On motion of Mr. Fraley, Mr. Lesley was chosen Librarian for the ensuing year.

The Standing Committees for the year were then appointed, as follows:

*Committee on Finance.*—Mr. Fraley, Mr. J. F. James, Mr. Powell.

*Committee on Publication.*—Dr. Bridges, Mr. T. P. James, Dr. Ed. Hartshorne, Prof. Coppée, Dr. Wistar.

*Committee on Hall.*—Mr. F. Peale, Judge King, Prof. Coppée.

*Committee on Library.*—Dr. Bell, Rev. Dr. Stevens, Dr. Coates, Mr. Price, Rev. Mr. Barnes.

The list of surviving members was read, and corrected by the announcement of the death of Prof. Joseph S. Hubbard.

#### *Summary.*

On the List, Jan. 7, 1863, . . . . .	U. S.,	255,	Foreign,	136
Elected in the year 1863, . . . . .	U. S.,	24,	"	16
Deceased reported in 1863, . . . . .	U. S.,	12,	"	4
Number of members, Dec. 31, 1863, U. S.,		267,	"	148

Pending nominations, Nos. 506, 507, and new nomination 508, were read.

The Society then proceeded to ballot for members, and the ballot boxes being opened by the President, the following persons were declared duly elected members of the Society.

Prof. A. Morlot, of Lausanne, Switzerland.

Prof. Thomas Chase, of Haverford, Pennsylvania.

And the Society was adjourned.

#### *Stated Meeting, February 5, 1864.*

Present, twenty-one members.

Dr. WOOD, President, in the Chair.

Letters accepting membership were received from Prof. Thompson, dated Copenhagen, November 11, 1863, and from Prof. De Koninck, dated Liège, January 15, 1864.

A letter was read from the Royal Society, dated London, January 7, 1864, requesting the co-operation of this Society in completing or making as perfect as possible the Catalogue